

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MOSCOW 10734 261618Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 EURE-00 SSO-00 INRE-00
NSCE-00 USIE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07
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FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 244
INFO AMCONSUL LENINGRAD
AMEMBASSY AMMAN
USINT BAGHDAD
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
USMISSION SINAI
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI IMMEDIATE
USMISSION USUN

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E. O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: MOPS, SOPN, EG, XF, LY, UR
SUBJECT: SOVIET STATEMENT ON EGYPTIAN-LIBYAN BORDER CLASHES

REF: MOSCOW 10676

1. PRAVDA JULY 26 CARRIES WITHOUT DATELINE OR COMMENTARY
A STATEMENT BY THE SOVIET AFRO-ASIAN SOLIDARITY COMMITTEE
(ASSUME DEPARTMENT HAS FBIS TEXT) WHICH EXPRESSES "PROFOUND
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ALARM" AT REPORTS OF "EGYPT'S MILITARY ACTIONS AGAINST
LIBYA." IT NOTES THAT EGYPTIAN FORCES CROSSED OVER INTO
LIBYAN TERRITORY AND CAUSED "CONSIDERABLE DESTRUCTION" AND
"CASUALTIES AMONG THE CIVILIAN POPULATION."

2. THE STATEMENT GOES ON TO SAY THAT THESE
"FRATRICIDAL HOSTILITIES" PLAY INTO THE HANDS

OF "IMPERIALISM, ZIONISM, AND THEIR ALLY --
ARAB REACTION" AND WARNS, WITHOUT NAMING NAMES,
THAT "THOSE WHO ARE INFLAMING THIS CONFLICT
"TAKE UPON THEMSELVES GRAVE RESPONSIBILITY BEFORE
THE ARAB PEOPLES AND ALL THE WORLD'S PEACELOVING
PUBLIC." "THE SOVIET PEOPLE," SAYS THE STATEMENT,
"CALLS ON EGYPT TO END IMMEDIATELY THE ARMED ACTIONS
ON THE EGYPTIAN-LIBYAN BORDER."

3. COMMENT: THE STATEMENT IS A CAREFULLY-WORDED
ATTACK ON EGYPT WHICH STOPS JUST SHORT OF CALLING
EGYPT THE AGGRESSOR IN THE CURRENT CLASHES (THE ONLY
USE OF THE WORD IS IN A SCARCELY VEILED REFERENCE
TO ISRAEL). THE STATEMENT IS, HOWEVER, MODERATE BY
SOVIET STANDARDS AND CONTAINS NO CONDEMNATION OF
SADAT PERSONALLY. INSTEAD IT TAKES THE
HIGH ROAD AND COUCHES ITS APPEAL IN TERMS OF
SOLIDARITY OF THE ARABS AGAINST ISRAEL AND A
RETURN TO THE PRIMARY TASK, "THE LIBERATION OF THE
TERRITORY OCCUPIED BY ISRAEL IN 1967."

4. IT IS ALSO AN INDICATION OF THE SOVIET WISH TO
AVOID INFLAMING THE MATTER FURTHER THAT
THE AFRO-ASIAN SOLIDARITY COMMITTEE
WAS USED AS THE VEHICLE FOR THE STATEMENT RATHER
THAN AN "OFFICIAL" ORGANIZATION OR A PRAVDA
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UNSIGNED EDITORIAL. NO REFERENCE TO THE MEDIATION
EFFORTS OF EITHER ARAFAT OR BOUMEDIENE ARE
MENTIONED SINCE THIS WOULD TEND TO DILUTE THE
MESSAGE TO THE EGYPTIANS THAT THEY ALONE ARE
RESPONSIBLE FOR PUTTING AN END TO THE FIGHTING.
IN SHORT, THE STATEMENT IS CONSISTENT WITH THE
ORIGINAL SOVIET PRESS COVERAGE OF THE BORDER INCIDENTS
(REFTEL): AN EXPRESSION OF SERIOUS CONCERN
COUPLED WITH SUPPORT FOR LIBYA, BUT WITHOUT ANY
CONDEMNATION OF EGYPT.
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Copy: SINGLE
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Decaption Note:
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